**Reconsideration Meeting**

Background: A student took a photo of the cover of the book ***Gay America***, and the parent’s objection was based on the book title and the cover of the book.

The administrator first asked the parent to explain his objection and point of view. After the parent talked, we went over the following points:

* We try to thoughtfully select books using selection methods including Follett Titlewave which contains reviews from a variety of library reviewing sources (Kirkus, Booklist, School Library Journal, etc.)
* The library contains a wide variety of books for a wide variety of students
* A librarian cannot select books based on his/her value system. We need to provide books that address the needs of the entire student population. The librarian doesn’t necessarily condone the ideas of every book in the library—we have books on childhood slavery and drug abuse, etc.
* We have books in the library about a variety of controversial social issues--abortion, eating disorders, drug addiction, teen suicide, gangs, etc.
* We have gay students at our school
* This is a First Amendment, freedom of speech, issue.
* If you don’t like a book—you don’t have to read it; you can put it back on the shelf.
* District policy includes information about following the 1st amendment and providing a diverse collection
* Information I used from reviews when selecting the book:
  + starred review
  + 6 reviews
  + grades 7-12, grades 7-10, middle school and high school students
  + information is solid
  + well-written
  + history of American gay life
  + history of gays and lesbians, history in other countries
  + good index, excellent notes, and a selected bibliography of resources

The meeting ended with our giving the parent a copy of the district reconsideration policy and the document to fill out for reconsideration of a book.

**Other notes I had which were not discussed with the parent:**

* 6 middle schools have informational books about this topic
* This book was purchased in August 2010 when our school was 7-9; it has been checked out twice and found on the back table multiple times per year
* The book was published in 2008 and some of the information is out of date
* I purchased this book based on reviews. After the parent’s objection I read the complete book. Because of some of the mature sexual themes, I did put a circulation note to inform students that it had mature themes.